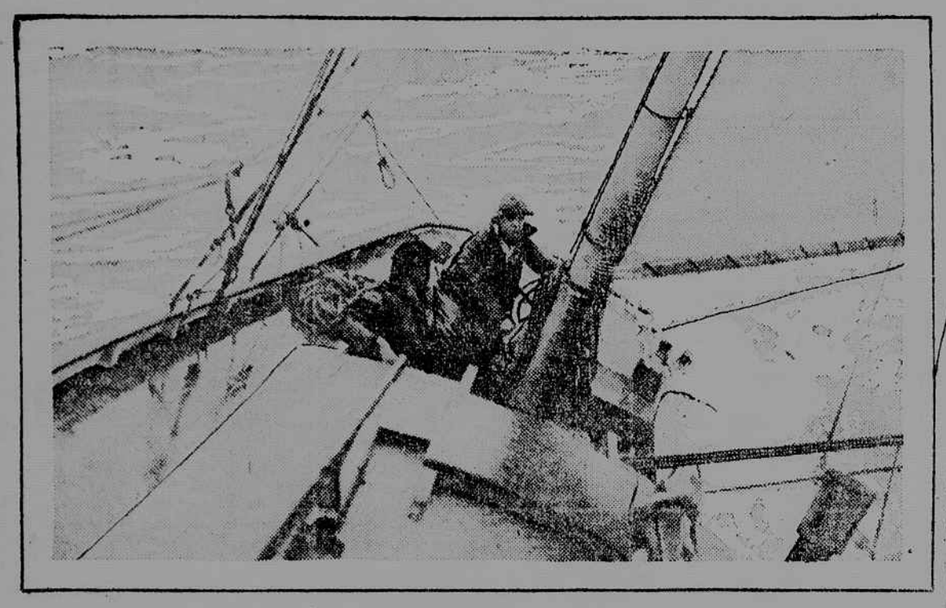
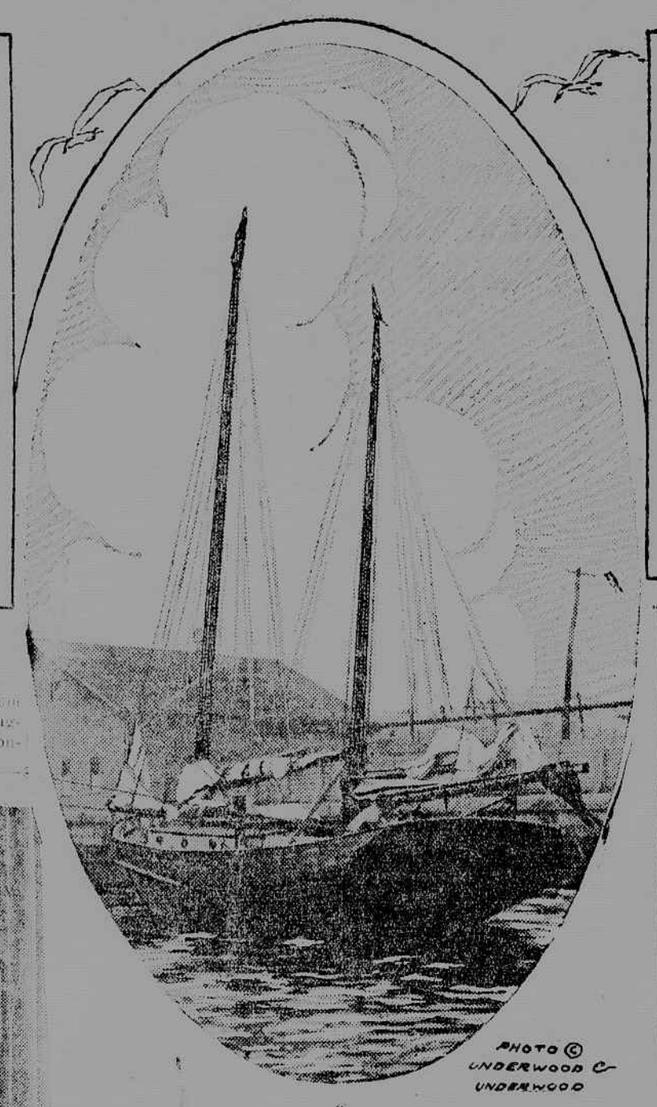
Tiny Boat, Defying Storms, Twice Crosses the Atlantic





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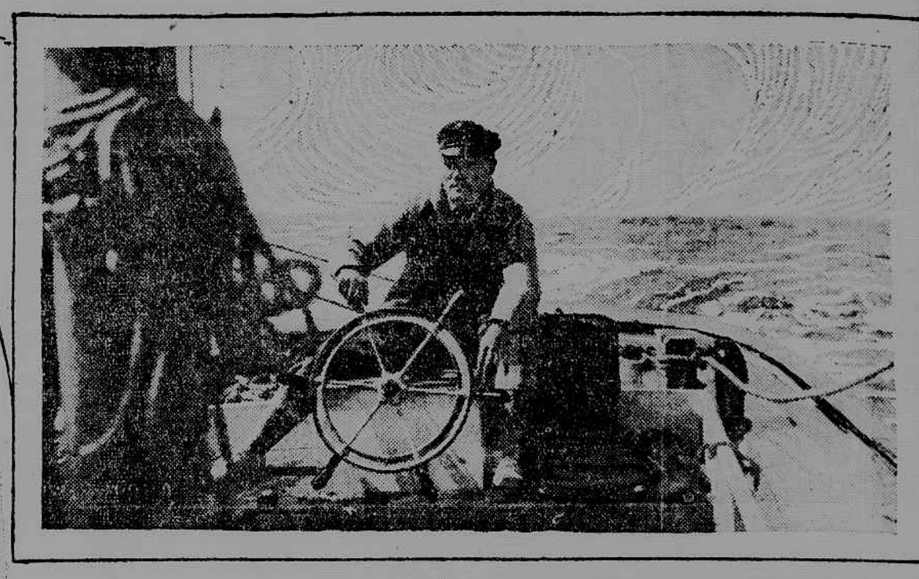

WILLIAM WASHBURN NUTTING, F. R. G. S., at the wheel of his auxiliary ketch Typhoon, in which he twice crossed the Atlantic

By Daniel Mabie

"THERE was one time," admitted William Washburn Nutting, "when I thought the cruise was over—well, out in the Atlantic."

What he was talking about, of course, was that mighty blow which overtook the forty-five-foot auxiliary ketch Typhoon on its homeward-bound voyage from Cowes, England, where he had gone to report the Harmsworth boat races. As two of his fellow adventurers on the voyage were at that moment floundering in the sea, and the ketch itself was on its beam ends almost, the thought that came to Nutting seemed only natural. The wonder was, all things considered, that the thought did not develop into reality, and it was, perhaps, to emphasize this very fact that Nutting tried to do as he talked.

To Prove a Theory

Nutting's theory is that a small craft can be made as seaworthy for ocean cruises as a large one, and it was this that prompted that extraordinary voyage across the Atlantic as much as anything else. What is more, he seemed to have proved his point, although he made haste to add that he didn't desire to encourage young men to invite disaster by undertaking foolhardy adventures.

The Typhoon, although very much smaller than any of the caravels which brought Columbus and his company across the Atlantic, and smaller, too, than the Snark, in which Jack London started out on his voyage to the South Sea Islands, sailed to England and back without lasting injury. Craft several times the size of the Typhoon had a great deal of trouble in the worst of the storms that overtook her. Big ocean liners were buffeted and delayed. One three-masted schooner, seen from the ketch, took in sail and scurried before the wind like a frightened wraith.

Hit by a Big Wave

But the tiny Typhoon, flaunting a brave show of canvas, kept her course until a sea mightier and more sudden than the rest slapped down upon her, causing her to reel to one side and burying deck, masts and rigging in the smother of waters.

LUGGING all the sail she'll carry

Then, convinced that seamanship could do no more and that the ship would have to fight out the storm by herself, Nutting and his companions—including, of course, the two who had been washed overboard and miraculously rescued—retired to the cabin. First, to be sure, they furled all sail and battened down everything movable, after which, in the comparative security of that rolling cubicle, they had, as Nutting afterward described it, "a good sing." They sang songs like the brave souls they were, and in the end the ship justified their faith. She came through gallantly and tied up at length at St. George, S. I.

"There is no reason why a small boat cannot be made strong enough to withstand any sea," Nutting insisted several days afterward, in the office of Motor Boat, the semi-monthly magazine of which he is the managing editor.

Sea Was Far Away

I must say that Nutting was very casual about it, and perhaps the surroundings accentuated his manner. The publication of which he is the editor is in a huge office building in Thirty-ninth Street, this city, given over to class journals, and the interior presented a very busy scene indeed. There was no suggestion anywhere of the sea.

In the first place, there is nothing of the sea dog or the Jack London type of adventurer about Nutting. He admits he is sometimes called "captain," but explains he is nothing of the sort. What he is is a writer, an editor and a mechanical engineer. And he looks it. He is about thirty-five years old and is just beginning to get bald, which adds to his intellectual appearance. He is of medium height, compactly built, smokes a pipe and is a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London, a title that was bestowed upon him not long ago in recognition of a scientific expedition which he was too modest to talk about.

He is an enthusiastic yachtsman, and from what I could gather it was to promote the cause of yachting more than anything else that he took the Typhoon twice across the Atlantic.

Typewriters clicked in the room while he talked. Everything suggested the familiar and the common-

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TWO of the seamen of the Typhoon

place, with no hint anywhere stimulating the imagination to a tale of heroism and adventure. The genial person in rough homespun sitting opposite me was, as he sought to make it appear, a fellow craftsman, who had gone on an assignment to report a boat race. True, he had gone aboard a craft you could load with ease on one end of a New York ferryboat (if, indeed, you couldn't almost tie it on the back of a truck), but it all went to show what a fine and a safe sport yachting is once you understand it.

Why, Indeed?

With our magnificent coast line and the Sound right at our back door, why don't more people go in for yachting? Nutting wanted to know.

He succeeded so well in keeping up the atmosphere of matter-of-fact that it was only afterward you recalled with a start that the Typhoon's entire displacement was only fifteen tons, as against the 180 tons burden of the Mayflower, which brought the Pilgrims over. You had a sudden, sickish misgiving that perhaps those earlier voyages, over which you thrilled in your youth, had been overdramatized and that history had played a mean trick upon you.

Anyway, here was William Washburn Nutting to prove it was not so much of a trick after all, and that the smallness of a ship, provided it was structurally sound, did not necessarily increase the danger of making a cross-seas voyage in it.

And yet there was that incident of the unexpected sea which knocked the tiny vessel flat and washed two of its crew overboard. Nutting had told the story to newspaper reporters before, but repeated it for my benefit. The Typhoon had made the voyage to Cowes safely. Nutting had reported the boat race for his magazine and was on the way back when the big storm struck. The Typhoon was in latitude 35.33 longitude 70 of the Gulf Stream. Aboard, in addition to Nutting, was Uffa Fox, master of sea scouts at Cowes; a youngster named James Manson Dillaway, an American avi[illegible] had won per-[illegible]ship at Ponta Delgada, on the Island of San Miguel.

THE Typhoon safe in port after its return trip

one of two lines trailing astern to steady the ship.

Sang the Storm Away

"I was responsible for Dorsett, and we spent an anxious time until we got him aboard," said Nutting. "After he caught the line it kept slipping through his fingers as we hauled and we were in constant fear of losing him. When we got him close enough to lay hold with our hands we didn't have strength enough at first to pull him up. We had not been eating much that day and were pretty weak. But at last we made a united effort and got him on board. Then, having lowered all sail, we went below and let the ship take care of itself. We had a good rest and sang songs to pass the time. Fortunately, we had a little cognac on board and a nip of this heartened us a little."

The Typhoon rolled about considerably that night, but remained upright at least, which was as much as those on board could ask, considering that the storm was so bad that even the giant steamship Aquitania, bound for New York from England, was delayed by it. Finally the wind wore itself out and the rest of the voyage was made without mishap.

"It was a trying experience, and I would not recommend crossing the Atlantic in ships as small as the Typhoon as a pleasure trip," said Nutting. "I don't want a lot of youngsters going in for dangerous expeditions which may cause them to be drowned. But the voyage of the Typhoon proved that a small ship can be made safe in any kind of sea and it certainly ought to encourage explorations in much safer waters. There is nothing more fascinating than making strange ports, and with our magnificent coast line, this is a sport which ought to be encouraged.

Pleasure of Cruising

[illegible] cruising about [illegible] than sitting about in wicker chairs on large yachts. And it is one of the least costly of recreations. Nevertheless, although the youth of America have taken so eagerly to the automobile and all the sports related to it, they have not gone in for the water sports anything like they have in England. There is no more exclusive organization in the world perhaps than the Royal Yachts Squadron of England, but its members are constantly puttering about in small boats and have a thorough love for that form of recreation.

"But in the United States cruising about in such craft frequently has been considered incompatible with high social standing, and the sport has been retarded as a result. This is all the more to be deplored because the opportunities for developing it are so extensive. We have an excellent coast line, which offers many attractions for small boat cruising. Here at New York are the Sound and magnificent facilities for sailing. It is a sport in which Englishmen are far ahead of Americans and which should be encouraged in this country."

Was No Navigator

There is one thing which Nutting said in connection with the exploit of the Typhoon which deserves mention. He is not a professional navigator, and until he started away in the Typhoon had had little experience in the use of a chronometer. On the trip to Europe Nutting was accompanied by F. W. (Casey) Baldwin, designer of the Typhoon, but Baldwin was as inexperienced in finding longitude and latitude at sea as Nutting.

"Casey had played a bit with his sextant and had gained some acquaintance with the various methods of obtaining longitude by a casual reading of several textbooks," said Nutting, "and I had written an article on the '89-49' method of obtaining latitude.

"But until we were in mid-Atlantic neither one of us had ever had occasion to work up a time sight with a real live chronometer. It is a damaging admission, but it goes to prove that navigation is really not the formidable thing we are likely to consider it."

Which is another proof of Nutting's determination not to view his exploit in a heroic light—and from what I could see this was not a pose on his part.

The Typhoon was built at Alexander Graham Bell's plant at Baddeck, N. S. Her dimensions are 45 feet over all, 36 feet waterline, 12 feet beam and 6½ foot draft. She has a lead keel weighing 3,000 pounds.

In Twenty-two Days

The trip to Europe was made in twenty-two days. The return voyage was begun on Augu[illegible] Typhoon passed the Bay [illegible] to Ferrol, Spain, [illegible] from there to Corunna, sailing thence for the Azores on September 20. On Octo-ber 3 the Typhoon picked up San Miguel Island, but was blown off for four days by a heavy storm. When the ketch finally made the island of Santa Maria the food supply had long been exhausted.

The storm that drove the Typhoon away from San Miguel damaged eight American vessels in the vicinity to such an extent that they had to return to port for repairs.

But the little Typhoon outlasted all these dangers, and is now safe in her home waters. Which seems to give strength to Nutting's contention that just because a boat is small she is not necessarily unsafe, even for transatlantic travel.

RUNNING before the wind in a stiff blow

Auction Bridge

By R. F. Foster

Author of Foster on Auction, Auction Made Easy, Foster's Complete Hoyle, etc.

AMONG the exceptions to the rule of always leading your long suit against the declarer, your partner not having made a bid, must be noted the cases in which all three of the plain suits are better if led up to than if led away from. For the benefit of the beginner, it may be explained that a suit is led up to when the holder is the last player on the trick. It is led through when he is the second player. It is led away from when he has to open it himself.

The advantages of finessing have already been explained at length in these articles, and the combinations that are chiefly used in finessing have been given. The best known is ace-queen, the position of the king being unknown. Another is king-jack, the play of the jack being a finesse against the queen, hoping the jack will drive the ace.

In order to get the full benefit from such combinations of cards as these it is essential that the lead should come from the weaker hand, so that at least one adversary should have to play to the trick before the finesse is made. It does not require any argument to prove that if these combinations are "led away from" all the advantage of the finesse is lost. A declarer who had two small clubs in dummy, with ace-queen small in his own hand, who led the suit away from ace-queen would be set down at once as a dub, because unless one of his opponents has seven clubs and the other has the king alone the declarer must lose two tricks if he leads the ace or queen and will probably lose two if he leads small.

The same is true of the lesser combination, king-jack and others. If it is led away from every trick in the suit may be lost, no matter how the high cards lie. To a less extent, but still to a disadvantage, the lead from any single honor that might kill an honor in the hand of the adversary on the right presents itself. That is why so many players will not lead away from an ace when they have only three small cards of the suit. They hope to kill something with it. If they lead it three small cards drop, and perhaps the opponents are relieved as to the safety of a poorly guarded king.

Suits headed by any two honors not "touching," that is, not next each other in value, such as king-ten, queen-ten, or suits headed by the king, are all bad ones to lead away from. This is universally recognized by the declarer, who carefully avoids them if he can. They are just as weak leads for the adversaries, but they are not always as carefully avoided.

When there is a trump declaration, and the leader finds himself with two or three suits that are bad ones to lead away from, he can do one of two things: lead some weak, short, or worthless suit, or lead the trump. Take this case:

Z deals and [illegible]

The solution of the problem given last week, No. 31, in which there were no trumps, Z to lead and Y-Z to get four tricks, follows:

Z leads the five of diamonds. The best defense is for B to put on the ace and return the suit, hoping Y may make a mistake. Z wins the return, A discarding a heart, Y the ten of clubs. Z then lays down the ace of clubs and whichever suit A discards Y keeps.

If Y is allowed to hold the first trick with the nine of diamonds he must lead a spade. B discards a club, Z the jack of hearts and A wins. Whatever A leads next Y wins, and it is B that is in trouble with his discards, as Z will keep the suit that B lets go.

BRIDGE PROBLEM NO. 32

[illegible] and Z [illegible] Y and Z want six tricks. How [illegible] next week.

School for Card Players

AUCTION BRIDGE

Question—We had a duplicate contest in which a deal came up on which three different opening declarations were made, and there is a bet as to which one was the correct one. The dealer held seven diamonds to the king, queen, ten; five spades to the ace, queen, ten, and the ten of hearts. Some bid a diamond, some a spade, and some passed, waiting to hear what others had to say.—C. C. C.

Answer—This is a typical two-suiter, and the rule is to call the higher ranking suit first, when either suit is strong enough to justify a free bid. The dealer should start with one spade, and if he is overcalled he should bid the diamonds. This practically commands his partner to pick the suit that he is stronger in, spades or diamonds, and not to go no-trumps. The reason for declaring the spades first, although diamonds are longer, is to enable the partner to make his selection without increasing the contract.

Question—Playing duplicate, four or eight hands at a table before changing partners, is it necessary to make the 30 points for game on one deal, or can a partial score be used, so that 125 may be added if game is made in two deals?—B. M. T.

Answer—The rules adopted by the Knickerbocker Whist Club of New York, which are generally regarded as the authority for duplicate auction, require game to be made on one deal. The reason for this is to avoid the inequalities of getting a partial score just before or after [illegible] being [illegible] score at another table.

Question—I have enough to rummy out except a pair of treys in hand. On drawing a third trey, I lay them all down. The argument is that I must keep one card to discard, and therefore cannot lay down all three treys. —F. J. B.

Answer—The rule that a player must always discard after laying out a combination is in order to give the next player some card to take or leave in place of the one the previous player has taken up. As the game is over the moment any one rummys out, there is no necessity to lay out a discard, as no one can use it; so any player who can get down all his cards without discarding may do so.

RUSSIAN BANK

Question—If I turn up a black five, can I take a red six off my own discard or stock so as to make the five playable on a continuing sequence?—M. H.

Answer—How is it that the red six has not already been put in place before the black five was turned, so as discard or stock? Any card that [illegible] can be played from anywhere any one no-trump. Second hand passes. I hold [illegible]-ace-jack to seven spades, with two outside aces. Should I take out the no-trumper with two spades or let it stand?—H. C. D.

Answer—If anything, bid three or four spades, so as to indicate the great strength of the hand, and prevent any return to no-trumps. Major suit contracts are always safer than no-trumpers.

RUM